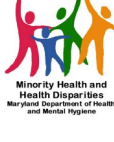




Maryland Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities (MHDH)

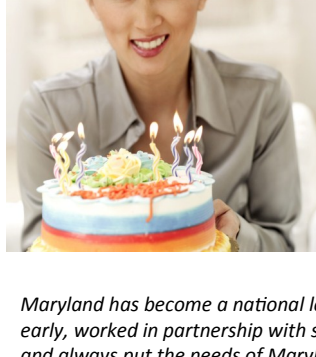
invites you to celebrate



Minority Health Month

April 2013:

Health Care Reform and You



Happy Birthday, ACA!

Lt. Governor Anthony G. Brown recently released the following statement in recognition of the third anniversary of the signing of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA):

Three years ago, President Obama signed the Affordable Care Act because he believed that access to health care was an important part of growing our Middle Class and laying a strong foundation for America's future.

Maryland has become a national leader on health care reform because we acted early, worked in partnership with stakeholders in the public and private sectors, and always put the needs of Marylanders first. As a result of our actions, we've expanded health care coverage to over 367,000 Marylanders who were previously uninsured. We also worked together to build a state-of-the-art health benefit exchange, The Maryland Health Connection, that accommodates the specific needs of individuals and small businesses throughout our state.

While we've made great progress, we know that our work is far from over. Looking to the future, Governor O'Malley and I pledge to continue our efforts until each and every Marylander has access to quality, affordable health care.

How Does the ACA Specifically Aim to Reduce Health Disparities among Racial/Ethnic Minority Groups?

1. Data Collection and Reporting by Race, Ethnicity and Language

- Population surveys collect and report data on race, ethnicity and primary language;
- Collect/report disparities data in Medicaid and CHIP;
- Monitor health disparities trends in federally-funded programs

2. Workforce Diversity

- Collect and publicly report data on workforce diversity;
- Increase diversity among primary care providers, long-term care providers, dentists, mental health providers, nursing professions, etc.;
- Health professions training for diversity.

3. Cultural Competence Education and Organizational Support

- Develop & evaluate model cultural competence curricula;
- Disseminate cultural competence curricula through online clearinghouse;
- Cultural competence training for primary care providers and home care aides.

4. Health Disparities Research

- Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) to carry out comparative effectiveness research (CER);
- Increase funding to Centers of Excellence;
- Support collaborative research on topics including cultural competence.

5. Health Disparities Initiatives in Prevention

- National oral health campaign, with emphasis on disparities;
- Standardized drug labeling on risks & benefits;
- Maternal & child home visiting programs for at-risk communities.

6. Addressing Disparities in Insurance Coverage

- Remove cost-sharing for American Indians/Alaska Natives (AI/AN) at or below 300% federal poverty level (FPL);
- Enrollment outreach targeting low income populations;
- Nondiscrimination in federal health programs and exchanges.

How Does the ACA Offer a Platform to Improve Delivery of Health Care for Diverse Populations?

1. Advancing the Health of Communities

- Leveraging support for community-based strategies and engagement in reducing disparities.
- Promoting integrated strategies across health and social services to improve the health of diverse communities.

2. Health Care Organization-based Initiatives

- Developing and testing model programs that link specific organizational efforts to reducing disparities and improving quality of care.
- Documenting and linking non-profit community needs assessment/benefit requirements to health care reform incentives to address disparities.
- Preserving and transitioning the health care safety net.

3. Individual-level Initiatives

- Developing effective care/disease management and self-management interventions and protocols for diverse patients.
- Mitigating the effects of overweight/obesity and negative environmental factors that may impede progress on reducing disparities.

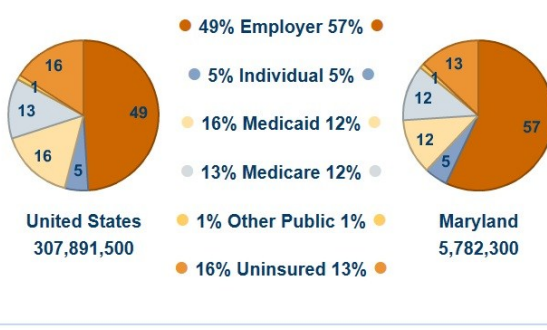
"Maryland must seize the opportunity presented by health care reform to embrace a 'culture of care' where individuals have not only health insurance, but also meaningful access to health care services.

In its implementation efforts, the state must recognize the many reasons some individuals cannot access health care, which include racial or ethnic disparities, geographic, cultural, or linguistic barriers and provider shortages.

Achieving a culture of care will ensure that these barriers are addressed."

Maryland Health Care Reform Coordinating Council, Final Report Jan. 2011

Health Insurance Coverage of the Total Population, states (2010-2011), U.S. (2011)



Kaiser Family Foundation, <http://statehealthfacts.kff.org>

How Is Maryland Integrating Diversity and Equity into Health Care Marketplace Planning?

In the first half of this year, the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange will focus on outreach and training, including setting a Consolidated Service Center, which will be the main starting point for consumers, employers, navigators, and others with questions on the exchange, Medicaid, and other health insurance options.

The exchange's communications and outreach plan outlines how it will segment the target audience of uninsured people into groups by factors such as age, ethnicity, income, and media habits and will plan different strategies to reach each group including paid advertisements, sponsorships, faith-based organizations, community organizations, health care providers, and navigator training.

The exchange will leverage existing resources and will collaborate with groups sharing a common vision such as advocacy organizations.

The exchange plans to hire a plain language writer, which will help in writing and designing consumer materials.

Summary of Progress on Integrating Diversity and Equity into Exchange Planning in Maryland:

- ◆ Diversity in board composition mentioned in the exchange legislation
- ◆ Diversity specified for stakeholder advisory groups
- ◆ Community meetings or focus groups held that target or consider race, ethnicity, and language needs
- ◆ Input from advocacy groups representing communities and patients of color
- ◆ Targeted outreach and education planned for limited English proficient and specific racial and ethnic groups
- ◆ Navigator/assisters program will focus on specific race, ethnicity, and language needs in enrollment
- ◆ Training materials to be developed for cultural and linguistic competency of navigators/assisters
- ◆ Planning for Internet web portal to provide access for limited English proficient people (taglines indicating availability of languages services)

Source: *The Affordable Care Act & Racial and Ethnic Health Equity Series. Report No. 1: Implementing Cultural and Linguistic Requirements in Health Insurance Exchanges* (March 2013). Texas Health Institute: www.texashealthinstitute.org/uploads/1/3/5/3/13535548/Implementing_cultural_and_linguistic_requirements_in_health_insurance_exchanges_march_2013.pdf

Key Health Coverage Challenges Faced by People of Color

People of color account for a significant share of the U.S. population today and are projected to make up the majority of the population by 2050. There is significant diversity among communities of color, reflecting varied cultural backgrounds, immigration statuses, and languages.

While the majority of people of color have a full-time worker in the family, they are more likely to be in low-income, low-wage jobs that provide limited access to employer-sponsored insurance.

Moreover, even when offered coverage by an employer, they are likely to have difficulty affording it given their low incomes. Similarly, coverage on the individual market is often unaffordable.

Source: KFF Kaiser Commission on Key Facts: *Health Coverage by Race and Ethnicity: The Potential Impact of the Affordable Care Act* (March 2013): www.kff.org/minorityhealth/upload/8423.pdf

Learn More About How Health Care Reform Will Affect You

Visit the Kaiser Family Foundation's website for "Illustrating Health Reform: How Health Insurance Coverage Will Work" and click on the characters below for examples of individuals, families, and businesses:

<http://healthreform.kff.org/profiles.aspx?source=QL>

Or watch the short, animated video "Health Reform Hits Main Street" to learn more about changes that are happening now, and the big ones coming in 2014:

<http://healthreform.kff.org/the-animation.aspx>

Illustrating Health Reform: How Health Insurance Coverage Will Work

Click on the YouToon characters and Main Street businesses to view their illustrative profiles and learn how the Affordable Care Act will affect their coverage. Access downloads, additional resources and video explainers. View "Health Reform Hits Main Street" to learn more about the problems with the current health care system, the changes that are happening now, and the big changes coming in 2014.

